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MISS HOSMER's statue of *Ænone* (described in the February number of *THE CRAYON*) has, it seems, been purchased by a merchant of St. Louis, and is now in that city on public exhibition. A correspondent informs us, "it is the first event of the kind that city can boast of."

THE illustrated edition of "Bryant's Poems" promises to be a very fine work, so far as we can judge by the advance sheets that have been forwarded from England as proofs of the illustrations. The drawings are mainly by Birket Foster, and they are beautifully engraved. The book is to be published by Messrs. D. Appleton & Co., and is to be ready by the end of this year.

THE collection of pictures belonging to A. E. Douglass, Esq., lately disposed of at auction, indicates a growing taste for Art in this community. The collection consisted mainly of paintings by American artists. The following pictures were disposed of at the prices affixed. A Landscape, by Doughty, brought \$95. A small study in oil of "Ministering Angels," by Cole, 87½. "Franconia Mountain," by Kensett, \$525. "The Sibyl's Temple," \$310; and a landscape composition, "Recollections of Italy," \$320, both by Cropsey. There were also sold several sketches by Cropsey, ranging from \$10 to \$90 each, according to size. A landscape, entitled "Cain and Abel," by C. P. Oranch, brought \$80. A picture by Ranney, called "The Crossing," brought \$122. "The Artist's Brook, Conway," by Shattuck, brought \$100. "Falls of Indian Brook," by Post, \$80. A study, by Hart, \$30. "The Lazy Lesson," by Lang, \$105. "The Toilet," by Lazarus, \$85. "The October Festa," by Hall, \$300. Portraits of Presidents Madison and Monroe, by Gilbert Stuart, \$565 each.

GLEANINGS AND ITEMS.

ART-UNIONS.—The *North British Review* for February, 1857, under this title has an article on the text that *whatever is highest in the productions of mind, must of necessity be unpopular*; making it by no means necessary, however, that the converse is true, the odds being on the whole woefully against the wanderer from traditional paths, as the reviewer thinks. Art-Unions originated in Napoleon's day and domain, the idea passing thence into Flanders, and has latterly been acted upon in Prussia under the guidance of Humboldt. Messrs. Bell and Hill, in 1834, first worked it out in Edinburgh, whose public somehow found under the circumstances no great difficulty in getting over the idea of its encouragement to gambling propensities, for the patronage of Art at this time was at an exceedingly low ebb, and a few interested felt that something should be done. The Scottish Academy, already formed, proved that the public taste of that community was at such a low stage, that only the lowest class pictures could find purchasers. Now, there came a change, it is said. £36,900 were raised in nine years, and expended in works of Art, which were distributed to subscribers, and artists became jubilant. Their success was the instigation of other Art-Unions in Britain; and it is computed that up to the present time upwards of £1,000,000 has been collected, and expended among artists. The reports of these societies tell us they have been the cause of the increase of private patronage in nearly the same ratio. The reviewer contends that the uniting of the few guineas that each subscriber only feels able to afford as encouragement to Art, into a larger sum under some such direction as these societies afforded, was the only way that the mass could become serviceable to Art. This idea was reversed when the printsellers undertook to do

the same thing for selfish ends; and their proceedings are of course reprehensible, because they catered to the low, popular taste, and did not attempt to raise it.

The reviewer proceeds to comment upon the management of such unions, and discriminates between the Continental and Edinburgh system of having an Art-committee to choose the pictures for the prizes, and the London system of having the drawer of a prize choose his own picture, according to the money drawn; and is in favor of the former, deeming public taste will find no regeneration under the latter. A committee of the House of Commons, in 1845, reported in favor of the former, with some modifications that the body of subscribers should choose a committee of three, and add thereto, of their own choice, an artist and an amateur. The reviewer prefers the old Edinburgh system of a committee of fifteen, with no outsiders, as being less open to the reception of individual prejudices.

We consider that the favorable aspect of Art-Unions is, that they can make an aggregate of individual means for the distribution of Art, and perhaps for the encouragement of artists, which, however, is not guaranteed by the other unless under competent direction; and the increased power consequent upon such an aggregate can be wielded more effectively than its divisional parts by themselves. We will not enter now into the details of the injury to Art that comes from the mismanagement of such associations, or strike a balance between the risks.

THE *Evening Post* is publishing an excellent series of articles on the "Private Libraries of New York," and No. XII. of the series contains an account of the Rev. E. L. Magoon's collection. The drawings by Turner, which have been already noticed in *THE CRAYON*, are mentioned, together with two by that artist, which have come into Dr. Magoon's possession lately.

One is "St. Bernard," accompanying which is Landseer's drawing of the two noble dogs of the St. Bernard breed, which Turner used in the composition of his sketch. There is another brilliant sketch by Turner, from nature, portraying land, river, inlet and open sea, canopied by a clear sky, all aglow with the brightness of the morning sun, presenting a noble key to the "Rivers of France," "Southern Coast," "Rivers of England," "Harbors of England," and the admirable commentaries upon these works of this distinguished artist by Ruskin.

Four of the above Turners, together with the Stothard and Landseer, came into the collection directly from the hands of Mr. Ruskin, who, in placing them in the possession of the present owner, remarked, "In these drawings you have the essence of Turner."

There are in the collection three handbooks filled with the sketches of the English artist Hardinge, containing many curious drawings of castles, tombs, inscriptions, and weapons of war—among which latter are representations of the swords worn by Robert Bruce and William Wallace. The collection contains a number of illustrated manuscripts, the most important of which is a rare Psalter of the fourteenth century, which contains the readings of all the hymns quoted by Dante, after its litanies.

Studies among the Leaves.

*The Taste for the Picturesque among the Greeks,** is an instructive article, and one we should publish entire did not more pressing matter forestall the requisite space. We can only, therefore, extract a few passages. Mr. Cope begins with what we believe to be a true statement, that—

"The accidental character of that faculty, or rather habit, of our minds, which commonly goes by the name of taste, is in nothing more distinctly marked than in the late growth and local development of that which is now considered the indispensable mark of a refined

* By E. M. Cope. Cambridge Essays, 1856.

and cultivated intellect—an interest in the external aspect of Nature, a sympathy with all her various moods, and a love of *all* her scenes of beauty and of grandeur.”

He remarks further in this connection that the various aspects of external Nature, as generally placed before us, “in the works of our poets, and painters, and the lectures of our critics, is the growth of the present century.” Professor Lowell, in his lecture on Dante, makes the characteristic of modern poetical sentiment, as distinguished from the ancient, to consist (if we understood him rightly) in the subjective character of modern feeling as it acts upon Nature; man, yearning for sympathy, and attributing to external objects responsive qualities, which render Nature the mirror of his own mood and aspirations; and he illustrated the idea by comparing this sentiment to man’s love for woman—a striving to complete the endless chain of feeling which acts and reacts with such life-sustaining power. The Greeks, on the contrary, regarded Nature only as it ministered to sensuous perceptions. An idea well understood by considering mythology to be the forces that Nature suggests, so embodied as to appear within the circle of human passion and weaknesses.

But we somewhat anticipate Mr. Cope’s conclusions. We have for a long time awaited a clear statement of a principle to serve as an offset to the various ingenious systems which now-a-days so befog minds in search of “the Beautiful made easy.” The translators of sensation are getting to be as numerous as the great body of commentators on works of literary genius, and they are just about as compensating. A man who can feel the beauty of a poet’s inspiration has no need of a ladder by which to climb up and examine his head. So is it with Art. We, accordingly, quote the following as pertinent, if not conclusive:

“A preference for one class of beautiful objects over others depends more upon the associations amongst which we happen to be thrown, and the language and tone of thought current amongst those upon whose judgments we have been taught to rely, than upon any essential superiority in the objects themselves, or principles inherent in our own minds; not that we have no sense of beauty, either natural or artificial, when it is presented to us, but that amongst the infinitely varied forms of beauty it is hard to fix upon what is most worthy of admiration, and impossible, though the attempt is constantly made, to lay down any general and incontrovertible canons to which all men in all ages are bound to conform their taste and judgment.”

After having tunnelled through immense masses of metaphysical jargon, as during life’s progress one lays the track of thought by reading, one is glad to breathe the fresh air of common sense, which is to be found in the above extract. The very thought that feeling is permitted to be catholic without regard to tyrannical individual theorems, is a consolation. And so do we find comfort in the following definition of—

“The very word taste, by which we express the faculty of selection. It bears silent witness by its primary signification to the right possessed by each individual to be the ‘measure’ of his own enjoyment of Nature and Art; so that, supposing each object to be excellent in its kind, a critic shall have no more right to impugn the taste of one who prefers Dante to Shakespeare, or a French to an English tragedy, or the Parthenon to Amiens Cathedral, or the scenery of Surrey to that of Switzerland, than to find fault with one who is pleased with the plain chop of a London tavern, more than with the varied *cuisine* and delicate wines of the Parisian *restaurant*.”

The only reservation we could make to the above, so far as Art is concerned, is, that the “kind,” however perfect an embodiment, should not stand in the way of our investigation

into the meaning of ideas only known to us through symbolism.

Our writer gives an excellent definition of the word picturesque:

“Everything is picturesque which is a fit subject for a picture; every great action, every noble or beautiful form, animate or inanimate, which can be brought within the scope of the pictorial art.”

This is the true definition. The false is the “more modern meaning, to which Mr. Ruskin’s definition of ‘parasitical sublimity’ applies” that which “invests with dignity scenes of ruin, desolation, and decay.”

We now come to that portion of the article bearing upon the love of the Greeks for the picturesque. Mr. Cope says that, the “modern meaning” of the word picturesque—

“As well as the sentimentalism, which is so near akin to it, seems to have been almost entirely wanting to the Greek mind. The love and study of Nature for her own sake was almost, if not quite unknown to that lively and ingenious people. ‘The description of Nature in her manifold diversity,’ says Humboldt, ‘as a distinct branch of poetic literature, was altogether foreign to the ideas of the Greeks; with them, landscape is always the mere background of the picture, in the foreground of which human figures are moving.’ Nay, we may go further, and say that it is often entirely absent, just as in the sister arts of sculpture (as, to take a familiar instance, in the frieze of the Parthenon) and of painting, in the best periods of Greek Art, the human figures, and their necessary adjuncts, are the *sola* objects of delineation.”

And, in a note, he says—

“None of the great painters of the most flourishing period of Greek Art seems to have paid any attention to landscape. So much as this may, I think, be gathered from the long catalogue of paintings by all the great Greek masters given by Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, lib. xxxv. Amongst the works of Polygnotus, Timagoras, Parrhasius, Zeuxis, Pamphilus, Apelles, Protogenes, Pansius, and many others of less note, which he enumerates, no nearer approach to landscape Art than grapes (in the famous story of the contest between Zeuxis and Parrhasius), horses, dogs, and oxen is recorded. A certain Pyreicus was held to have degraded himself and his art by painting—what we now prize so highly in the Flemings—barbers’ and cobblers’ shops, asses, eatables, and such like. Of another, Serapion, it is said, ‘that he could paint scenes (most likely for the stage), not men.’ The art of painting landscapes in fresco *on walls* was introduced in the reign of Augustus, by one Ludius. It does not follow from this that landscapes had not been painted at all before this period; all that Pliny seems to mean is, that they had not been used earlier as ornaments for rooms. They may, of course, have been introduced by the great masters as accessories and backgrounds for their figures; but, if so, it is, at any rate, evident, from the general tenor of Pliny’s remarks, that they were of subordinate interest. All the paintings of antiquity that have been preserved, amongst which are some landscapes, are, unfortunately, of a period not earlier than the second of the Roman Emperors. * * * * * Lessing justly observes (*Laocöon*, § xix. ult.), that the want of knowledge of perspective, which appears even in the later works that have been preserved, would alone have operated as a bar to a successful cultivation of landscape painting. But the motto of *all* Greek artists, painters included, might have been ‘The proper study of mankind is man.’ * * *

In further illustration of this subject he continues thus—

The interest of the enlightened and cultivated Greek—poets, artists, and people,—centred in man, his nature and actions, and the love of the picturesque was not. Yet it appears that *some* progress was early made in the Art of landscape-painting, which was certainly applied to scene-painting for the theatres, and possibly used for other purposes. But hear Plato as to the interest which the delineation of

objects, such as mountains, and rivers, and trees, excited in the mind of the Greek in comparison with the proper business of the painter and sculptor, the representation of the human form, under its various aspects and circumstances:

"In respect of the opinion formed by the spectators of the adequacy of an imitation, we shall discern, first of all, that we are satisfied with ever so distant a resemblance to mountains, and rivers, and woods, and the sky, and all the bodies that surround and revolve round it; and further, that as we have no precise knowledge about such things, we neither examine nor criticize the paintings of them, but employ in representing them mere indistinct and deceptive scene-painting; but whenever any one attempts to present a likeness of our bodies, we are keenly alive to any deficiency, by reason of the constant familiarity of our observation of them, and so prove severe judges if the artist fails to give us the (precise) resemblance of every part in every particular."

"But though the absence of picturesque descriptions of landscape thus forms a characteristic feature of Greek literature in its better periods, still there are in almost all writers other detailed passages, or at least epithets and allusions, from which the prevailing taste may be partially gathered. Now, one of the first things that strikes us in all such is the utilitarian character of the Greek notions of scenery. From Homer to Theocritus may be traced the same principle lying at the bottom of all their expressions in reference to nature, that only those objects are agreeable, and therefore, by association beautiful, which minister directly to man's comfort or sensual enjoyments; objects which stand in his way and bring discomfort, inconveniences, or danger, are ugly and dreadful. Thus the shady or fruitful tree, the cool water, the fertile plain, the calm sea, on which 'go the ships,' the clear, bright sky, whether by day or night, are delightful and lovely; the rain, the thunder-cloud, the tempest, the precipice, the torrent, the glacier, suggest no emotions but those of alarm or horror. The Greeks were an eminently practical, and also a highly sensual people, and both these tendencies contributed to this peculiarity of taste, or want of it, as we are accustomed to say. They could see no reason for admiring a rock which was rough and hard to climb, and interposed an obstacle to the journey between Megara and Corinth, or in the lightning which blasted the oak, or in the stormy sea which engulfed their corn ships or trimmes; they liked to see before them deep crops, and rich pastures, vines, figs, and olives; the stream, whose gentle murmur invited to repose, and the grassy bank and plane tree, with its thick shade and fragrant flowers, which seconded the invitation; objects which either regaled the senses, or suggested images of affluence and enjoyment. And as they were totally devoid of cant, affectation, and sentimentalism, what they really loved they talked and wrote about, and never dreamed they were under any obligation to express admiration and enthusiasm which they did not feel, merely in compliance with the prevailing fashion of the day. They could no doubt use *ad captandum* arguments to serve a temporary purpose, and declaim about the beauty of virtue and glories of their country, with as much exaggeration and as little sincerity as any modern orator; but from the ostentatious exhibition of delicacy and refinement, and the parade of spurious sentiment, the Greek was, I believe, entirely free."

We now conclude with the following extract, which, proceeding in the same vein, is the summing up of the article:

"Their gregarious habits, out-of-door life, early gymnastic training, and general attention to the care of the body, all tended to produce a healthy and cheerful tone of mind, free from affectation and sentimentalism, and all tendency to dreamy reverie, contemplative melancholy, and, in general morbid feeling and *schwärmerei* of every kind. Their hearty love of enjoyment, and the downright sincerity with which they abandoned themselves to their sensual impulses, unsoftened by the influences of refined and accomplished female society, unchecked by the still higher obligations to purity and benevolence inculcated by the Christian code, produced a coarseness of tone and manner which often shocks us, not merely in the licentious buffoonery of Aristophanes, but even in the pictures of society sketched by Xenophon, Plato, and writers of the highest refinement. Let any one who is inclined to doubt this, consider the picture of Athenian manners presented by Xenophon, in his *Symposium*—an account which has all the air of

being faithfully drawn from real life—of a convivial meeting of the most cultivated portion of polite society at Athens, in a place and period when literature, and the Arts had attained a development which has hardly since been paralleled. All this may help us to explain how it was that the Greeks missed the enjoyment of so much in nature that affords us exquisite pleasure, and associated pleasurable emotions, almost exclusively with smiling and cheerful scenes, and with those objects which contributed directly to their ease, comfort, and subsistence. Their highest source of interest lay in man, his nature, and actions; and all that might tend in any way to their discomfort and injury was distasteful."

VILLAS AND COTTAGES* is a book full of information for lay-students in domestic architecture. After wading through 27 pages of matter political, moral, physical, and financial, in which the Pandora box of American character is peeped into, we come to useful thoughts pertinent to the subject of the book. Without being based upon any particular architectural system, there is a great deal of good sound common sense developed; facts, suggestions, plans, and diagrams, are profusely and clearly explained, and these no proprietor can fail to understand, and be wiser, who will take the trouble to study them. Full justice is done to the subjects of ventilation, drainage, etc. The designs given in the book are well drawn by Mr. Withers, and they are very well engraved and printed. We have seen and admired several of the structures represented in these engravings, and have been impressed with the evidences of thought displayed upon them, even if we have sometimes questioned the taste of the design. That is not always to be charged to the architect. There is a hankering after meretricious ornament on the part of our public which will be gratified, and we know enough not to hold architects responsible for it. There is one aesthetic element of architectural art that we long to see more fully recognized, and that is—color. We conclude our notice with the following extracts relating to this speciality.

"The question of color is a most interesting one in any design for a country house, and seems at present but little understood in America, by far the greater number of houses being simply painted white, with bright green blinds. By this means each residence is distinctly protruded from the surrounding scenery, and instead of grouping and harmonizing with it, asserts a right to carry on a separate business on its own account; and this lack of sympathy between the building and its surroundings is very disagreeable to an artistic eye. Even a harsh, vulgar outline may often pass without particular notice in a view of rural scenery, if the mass is quiet and harmonious in color. * * * Woods, fields, mountains, and rivers will be more important than the houses that are built among them; and every attempt to force individual buildings into prominent notice is an evidence either of a vulgar desire for notoriety at any sacrifice, or of an ill-educated eye and taste. The colors of rural buildings should be carefully varied. They should be often cheerful and light, sometimes neutral, seldom dark, and never black or white; and there is, fortunately, no end to the combinations of tints that may be used in painting a house. * * * Any person who may wish to have his residence judiciously painted, will do well to depend on himself to make the selection of colors: and if he will but study the matter simply and fairly, trusting to his real natural instinctive taste, and will regulate his decision by his private feeling for what is agreeable or otherwise, instead of by what he finds next door to him, he will at once cut loose from conventional absurdity, and probably arrive at a result that will be artistic and pleasing. It is highly satisfactory that, in this matter of color, which is so important to rural art, there are constant opportunities for improvement. The necessity for repainting every two or three years fortunately compels the question to remain always an open one. Ill-planned roads and ugly houses are troublesome to alter; but improved taste may readily satisfy its craving for harmonious color, which will give, in every instance, a most liberal return for whatever outlay of thought or money may be judiciously bestowed on it."

We have to acknowledge receipt of Winckelmann's "History of Ancient Art," also "Chapman's Drawing Book," Part IV, both of which will receive attention in our next number.

* *Villas and Cottages*. By Calvert Vaux. Harper & Brothers, New York. 1857.